



House Transportation Committee

Testimony On

Rural Public Transportation Challenges

Presented By

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people are born, grow, live, work and age. In addition to access to healthcare, they include factors like socioeconomic status, education, the physical environment, employment, and social support networks. Mobility plays a significant role in many of the factors associated with those determinants of care. Without mobility, our residents find themselves unemployed, socially isolated, lacking the ability to access quality food and without access to medical treatment. There is a movement calling for a “Health in All Policies” approach where addressing these social determinants improves population health and ensures that decision-makers across different sectors are informed about the health, equity, and sustainability consequences of policy decisions in non-health sectors. This is why the work we are doing with transportation is very important to our communities.

rabbittransit, which is a municipal body, has recently formed a non-profit known as 3P Ride. 3P Ride is an effort focusing on *connecting* more people to more places, offering more possibilities. In a state where we are fortunate to have the Lottery program for Senior Citizens, the Persons with Disabilities program for individuals with disabilities, the MH-IDD transportation programs, the Medical Assistance Transportation Program, just to name the larger ones – the need for transportation is still prevalent. We are working with community stakeholders to identify non-traditional transit funds. We have applied for and received several grants from private and public organizations in an effort to advance expanded mobility services.

As Chairman Fiume mentioned earlier, I think it's important to note that Pennsylvania has one of the nation's most robust Human Service Transportation programs. It is far more effective than the remaining states, due to the fact that we operate fully coordinated service. Each Pennsylvania shared-ride provider has vehicles at any given time, carrying multiple individuals *all* with different funding sources. Why is this important? Through fully coordinated service *GREAT* economies of scale can be achieved. As a matter of fact, Pennsylvania has the second lowest cost for non-emergency medical transportation (MATP) in the country. Second only to Alabama.

In rural areas, this is especially important. As our vehicles move throughout the county, we are not constrained by silo-minded thinking in relationship to funding sources. Our focus is on efficiency, how we schedule and group individuals from one common area moving to another common area. This has allowed us to provide more transportation at lower costs than most of our counterparts nationally. I share this information with you today because there have been conversations from the Department of Human Services about brokering the Medical Assistance Transportation Program. My fear is that as the state begins creating policy that causes silo-minded thinking, we will ultimately see a reduction in the availability of services and increased costs. In a time where budgets are constrained and services are needed more than ever, making such changes to a highly